



Tennessee First to the Top Monthly Update

October 2011

- **Standards and Assessments** – The Department of Education continues to plan for the implementation of Common Core State Standards. At this point, the Department has confirmed that 96% of LEAs across the state are fully implementing common core standards in grades K-2 during the 2011-2012 school year. The Department is in the process of developing a long-term plan for full-scale implementation of the Common Core State Standards, including a schedule for training in all grades and subjects, for implementation in all grades and subjects, and for piloting assessments prior to the 2014-15 roll out of PARCC assessments.
- **Data** – Department staff have begun work with the contractor to develop specific timeline-oriented plans and identify the final indicators to be included in the Early Warning Data System (EWDS). The Department is in the process of convening a team of people to serve as an advisory committee to help make these final determinations. The Department issued 9th grade reports to all high schools in September to provide data on many of the indicators that will be provided through the EWDS in lieu of the system being operational. The reports were run again in early October to capture additional data as it is entered. A contract was finalized on October 17th with ESP Solutions Group, Inc. to serve as the vendor for the state's P20 Longitudinal Data System.
- **Great Teachers and Leaders** – During the month of October, Department leaders and TEAM staff have continued to work closely with regional consultants and supervisors to provide support in the field for implementation, specifically, navigating the first observation and pre-/post-conferences, entering data into the state's data system and selecting the 15% measure. Staff have also worked to finalize composite options for educators in non-tested grades and subjects: literacy, numeracy, literacy/numeracy combined, and overall (science, social studies, math and language arts). Further guidance on implementation continues to be shared weekly with field service center directors and superintendents. TEAM staff are also working with partner districts to move forward with pilot assessments for the 35% growth component in several non-tested grades and subjects in districts across the state. Finally, work is underway to produce the first of four annual reports to the state board and stakeholders on implementation. The report will go out at the end of the month and will include a feedback analysis, identified areas of success and challenge, and items that TDOE continues to study.
- **School Turnaround** – The Achievement School District (ASD) team is wrapping up its engagement with Bridgespan Consulting and will have its strategic launch plan completed by the end of this month. This plan will help the ASD team operationalize its work over the next 18 months. Per the launch plan, January will mark the month in which the list of direct-run schools

for 2012-14 will be finalized and made public. In addition to directing the charter and direct-run work, the launch plan will also drive staffing decisions. This month, Saumil Shah joined the ASD as a Director of Analytics and IT. Preliminary plans for the eventual structure of the ASD have been vetted by the Commissioner of Education and are pending review by the Governor.

Community forums have been completed at all four co-managed schools in Memphis, and the fifth community forum in Chattanooga is scheduled for November 3rd. Attendance at the forums averaged 200 community members, included parents, staff, alumni, and students. The forums were jointly sponsored by ASD, Memphis City Schools, the Memphis Urban League, and Stand for Children and provided an excellent opportunity for the community to provide input on the progress being made in their schools. Additionally, the forums afforded ASD staff members the ability to update stakeholders on the inner workings of the organization and how co-management will proceed through the remainder of the 2011-12 academic year.

The co-management implementation model for the 2011-12 academic year has been finalized and disseminated to all schools. An additional eight ASD-*eligible* schools have been notified that the ASD will be working with them this year to develop interventions and improvements, despite the fact that they are not technically co-managed. Field staff has been assigned to each ASD school to coordinate resources and turnaround supports. Similarly, field staff has also been assigned to the eight ASD-*eligible* schools.

The ASD charter school application review and selection process is underway and will be finalized and announced by November 15th. Interviews for ASD charter authorizations are complete and the ASD is working with the National Association of Charter Authorizers (NACSA) to cement the process. Authorization recommendations will be proposed by NACSA on November 8th, and the list of approved operators will be made public on November 15th. In addition to assessing charter applications, the ASD team—in conjunction with New Schools for New Orleans (NSNO)—is in the process of reviewing i3 applications. Final decisions on i3 awards will also be announced on November 15th.

- **STEM** – Resubmissions for the Nashville and Knoxville Regional STEM Innovation Hub were received and scored. The TSIN is working with the State to finalize a funding recommendation and bring it before the Advisory Council for their guidance. We expect to make awards for those two Hubs in November. Letters of Intent to submit a proposal to form a STEM Platform School and Regional Hub were due on October 21st. The TSIN received 10 letters of intent from across the state. We will hold 3 information sessions (Memphis, Johnson City and Chattanooga) in November and proposals are due December 30, 2011. We plan to award funding to at least one qualifying proposal from West, TN and one from East, TN in January 2012.

The TSIN is convening the STEM Advisory Council on November 2nd. At this meeting the Council will discuss alignment between the first draft of the Network's five-year strategic plan with the TN DOE's strategic vision for the state. The TSIN Strategic Plan will be completed in December. This plan will include the outline of a communications plan for the Network and its investments.

- **Local Education Agency Plans** – The Department has reviewed all scope of work plans and has made awards for year two funds. Fiscal monitoring is beginning for select districts and programmatic review is ongoing with the support of field service centers. The first amendment

window for LEAs to make revisions to their plans will open in early November. Districts will have approximately 4 weeks to submit revisions to the Department.